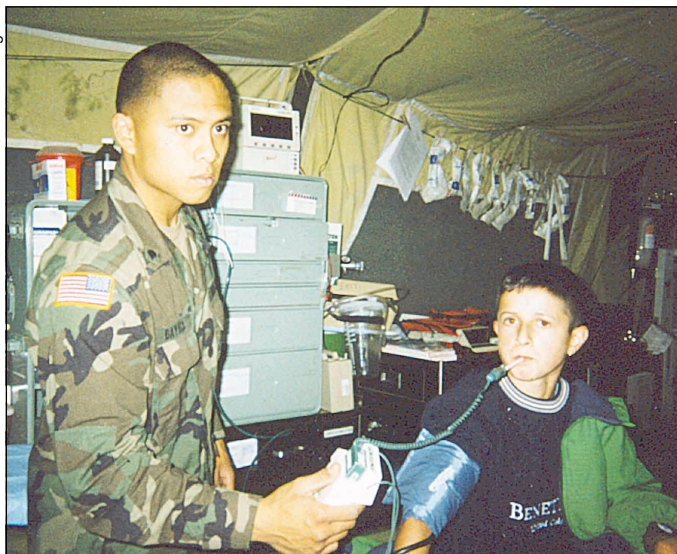


# Postmarks

Compiled by SSG Alberto Betancourt

From Army Posts Around the World

John D. Wagner



**SPC Rolando Bayaca, one of the California-based Reserve medics, takes a child's temperature inside a field medical shelter.**

**Los Alamitos, Calif.**

## Medics Return From Kosovo

CHASING terrorists was not what SPC George Maradakis and 21 other medics from the Army Reserve's 63rd Regional Support Command, in California, expected when they volunteered for peacekeeping duties in Kosovo. But that was just one of the many challenges the Reservists faced during their seven-month deployment.

"When we first got to Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo, a bunch of things happened in one day," SPC Rolando Bayaca said. "In the local area there were three motor-vehicle accidents, one gunshot wound and one person who had passed out."

Maradakis said he went on patrol with active-duty soldiers in search of suspects in a grenade-throwing incident.

"We raided three houses," he said. "We didn't find the guys, but we found a bayonet and the car that was used. The following day, U.S. soldiers and the United Nations police captured

the terrorists in a town called Vlasticka."

SSG Kenneth Donovan, the NCO in charge of the medics, said their primary mission

during the deployment was to help soldiers and civilians in medical need.

"If anyone was injured, we'd go out and get them," he said. "Our rule was to help them out with life, limb and eyesight."

He said the medics were split into two teams. Five soldiers went to Camp Able Sentry in Macedonia, and 17 to Camp Bondsteel. The Reservists transferred more than 500 patients and traveled more than 28,000 miles performing their medical missions. Complications included working through the language barrier and having to perform weapons searches on local civilian patients before treating them.

Donovan said one of the more difficult missions involved Serbian mourners headed for a gravesite in Kosovo, when their bus was blown-up by a remote bomb. Eight people were killed

and 40 were injured.

"We prepared for mass casualties," he said. "Helicopters were bringing them in. We offloaded the injured and triaged them before taking them into the emergency room."

SPC Jason Valles, who was on the trauma team that day, said he remembers cutting off the clothing of those who had shrapnel injuries.

"I inserted a chest tube to relieve pressure on the lungs in one patient," he said.

The Reservists worked with soldiers and civilians of many nationalities — among them French, German, United Arab Emirates, Ukrainian, Russian, Norwegian, Greek and Italian.

"We went there to treat people," said SPC Andres Cisneros. "We successfully treated them and we helped them." — *John D. Wagner, 63rd RSC Public Affairs Office*



SPC Lorin Smith

**More than 500 soldiers from Fort Lewis, Wash., made up Task Force Phoenix Blaze and deployed to Okanogan, Wash., to help firefighters battle blazes at the Virginia Lake Complex on the Colville Indian Reservation. The soldiers helped local firefighters put out "hot spots" throughout the smoldering wilderness.**



## Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo

### Observation Point Eases Protection Concerns

OBSERVATION Point Power opened Aug. 1 between the towns of Cernica and Gornji Livoc in Kosovo.

The OP allows soldiers living in both the Cernica and Gornji Livoc areas to relocate to the new facility while still providing an adequate protection force for the outlining area.

"Seeing us move out of town is a big change for the people of both Gornji Livoc and Cernica," said LTC David Bishop, commander for 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor. "For the next few days, we'll be reassuring them all that there isn't going to be any change, in terms of our presence and commitment."

Local civilians employed by Brown and Root, an American construction firm, supported by soldiers from the 11th Engineer Battalion, built the OP in six weeks.

The site contains living quarters, a dining facility, a weight room and a recreation room.

"It is a symbol of the commitment of U.S. forces in Kosovo," said BG Bill David, commander of the Multinational Brigade (East). "It is our hope that our continued cooperation will allow us to advance the peace process." — *SPC Travis Bascom, 358th MPAD*

## Cape Cod, Mass.

### "Touch a Truck" Event Teaches Families

"MAKE it fun and they will want to come and listen," said BG George Keefe, adjutant general for the Massachusetts National Guard. "We held a 'Touch



**LTC David Bishop, commander of 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor, cuts the ribbon to officially open OP Power in Kosovo.**

a Truck' event to get local families to come to the base to learn about the National Guard environmental programs, and for their children to have fun playing on the Army trucks."

The Massachusetts National Guard is reaching a significant milestone as it nears completion of its Final Environ-

mental Impact Report. "We have prepared this document with the community, and we want public input on the plan," Keefe said.

The FEIR outlines how the Guard will use and protect the Massachusetts Military Reservation, located on Upper Cape Cod.

The Massachusetts State Police, Highway Safety Bureau and elements of the Air National Guard also participated in the event. Children climbed on an OH-58 helicopter and marveled at the weapons and equipment on a military police Humvee.

Guard members set up a tent among the many exhibits and provided information about the FEIR. At the tent, visitors had an opportunity to submit on-the-spot comments about the report, or learn where to mail their questions or concerns.

"It was fabulous," said Roxanne Johnson, a local resident and director of The Upper Cape Family Network Program. "It was a great hands-on experience and the military people at each exhibit answered all our questions." — *MAJ Jayme Casgrain-Guido, Massachusetts National Guard*



**Young visitors get a hands-on tour of a Massachusetts Army National Guard earthmoving vehicle during the "Touch a Truck" event held on Cape Cod.**